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Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs

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### **MassCleanDiesel ‘Clean Air for Kids’ Program Retrofits More Than 2,100 School Buses Serving Nearly 310,000 Students Statewide**

#### ***Patrick-Murray Administration 3-Year Effort Results in Significant Air Pollutant Reductions***

REVERE – The Patrick-Murray Administration today celebrated the successful completion of the MassCleanDiesel “Clean Air for Kids” school bus retrofit program that has significantly reduced air pollutants emitted from thousands of older school buses serving nearly 310,000 students in 300 communities across the Commonwealth over the past three years.

“The response to the ‘Clean Air for Kids’ program has been tremendous,” said Governor Deval Patrick. “Thanks to this program, more than 2,100 school buses have received free diesel retrofits, promoting clean air for students and families in hundreds of communities.”

MassCleanDiesel “Clean Air for Kids” is the nation’s first fully-funded statewide voluntary program to reduce air pollution from school buses. Under the program, in state and federal funds paid for the installation of the diesel retrofit pollution controls on eligible school buses.

“The buses transporting our youngsters to school should not pollute the air our students breathe,” said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Richard K. Sullivan, who made the announcement today at the Paul Revere Elementary School in Revere. “Each school bus that was retrofitted under this program helps to protect our students and the overall health of hundreds of communities.”

With \$16.5 million in state and federal funding provided by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT), the MassCleanDiesel program installed pollution controls – known as diesel retrofits – on 2,114 diesel-powered school buses that served 300 local communities.

“The clean diesel effort is a perfect example of MassDOT’s ‘GreenDOT’ initiative and the Healthy Transportation Compact state agency collaborative to pursue healthy transportation options and support a cleaner environment,” said MassDOT Secretary and CEO Richard Davey.

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“Our goal is to provide an excellent and equitable education for all our students and that starts with helping them arrive at school healthy and prepared to learn,” said Education Secretary Paul Reville. “The MassCleanDiesel program is certainly helping us accomplish that goal.”

The MassCleanDiesel program is responsible for reducing emissions of harmful air pollutants by more than 27.2 tons per year. With the retrofit of the school bus fleet, particulate matter (PM) emissions are reduced by approximately 1.5 tons per year or by approximately 8.9 tons over the next six years, which is the expected life of the pollution control devices installed. Hydrocarbon (HC) emissions are reduced by approximately 5.4 tons per year or 32.5 tons over the life of the equipment, while carbon monoxide (CO) emissions are reduced by 20.3 tons per year or 121.9 tons over the life of the equipment.

“Each retrofit greatly reduces pollution from the exhaust and results in cleaner air for everyone in the community,” said Commissioner Kenneth Kimmell of the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), which operated the program. “This is especially important for children whose developing lungs are particularly susceptible to diesel exhaust’s damaging health effects.”

“Our children are one of our most precious resources and the city of Revere felt it was very important to protect the health of our students on their way to and from school,” said Revere Mayor Thomas Ambrosino. “I’m thankful that Governor Patrick offered this program, and I’m pleased that the school bus companies serving our city took full advantage of the retrofit technology to safeguard our students and community.”

“In addition to stronger academic programs, and more education on health-related issues including nutrition, the ‘Clean Air for Kids’ program is another way we can leave our young people more prepared to face the challenges of the 21st Century,” said Revere School Superintendent Paul Dakin.

Representatives from the bus companies that serve the students of Revere also attended today’s announcement. Healey Bus, Inc. installed retrofits on 19 school buses in its fleet, which are responsible for transporting approximately 2,000 students attending Revere, Nahant and Saugus schools.

CAPIC (Community Action Programs Inter- City) Head Start received retrofits on two buses transporting 150 students from Revere, Chelsea and Winthrop.

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Vocell Bus Company installed retrofits on nine buses transporting more than 600 students attending public schools in Chelsea and Medford, and students from Revere, Winthrop, Malden, Melrose, North Reading, Reading, Stoneham, Wakefield, Winchester, Woburn and Saugus who attend the Northeast Metropolitan Regional Vocational School in Wakefield.

Overall, there were 4,598 buses in school systems across the state that signed up for the program; 2,114 buses received the retrofits, while 2,484 buses were deemed ineligible because the buses already came with factory-installed emission reduction technology or would not remain in service for at least three years.

By participating in the program, the eligible school buses received a diesel oxidation catalyst (DOC), a crankcase ventilation (CCV) system, or both. DOCs, which function like a catalytic converter in the engine exhaust system, reduce tailpipe emissions. CCVs, which are installed on the engine, greatly reduce the infiltration of blow-by gases from the engine into the bus's interior.

There is strong scientific evidence that PM is implicated in the rising asthma rates in school-age children and is also considered a probable carcinogen. HC helps form ground-level smog, and exposure to this pollutant is associated with increased hospital admissions for respiratory distress, such as bronchitis. Exposure to CO can cause headaches, nausea, and even be fatal in some instances.

The school bus retrofits were performed by New England Transit Sales of Tyngsboro, Shuster Corporation of New Bedford, and Tri State Truck Center, Inc. of Shrewsbury.

For more information about school bus diesel retrofits and to find out if your school system participated in the program, turn to: <http://www.mass.gov/dep/air/diesel/masscleandiesel.htm>, e-mail program officials at [massclean.diesel@state.ma.us](mailto:massclean.diesel@state.ma.us), or call the MassCleanDiesel Help Line at 617-292-5809.

MassDEP is responsible for ensuring clean air and water, safe management and recycling of solid and hazardous wastes, timely cleanup of hazardous waste sites and spills, and the preservation of wetlands and coastal resources.

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